

A CARBONIFEROUS CONCEIT.

Back, my love, in the zone of time,
Ere man on earth did dwell
In the dreamy, misty, misty
Purchance I loved thee well.

The self-same question I may have asked
That now sets your cheeks aglow,
When we were sated and packed
In the sunshine of long ago.

The rich green ferns as a carpet spread
At the foot of the rocky trail,
That lazily rustled overhead
In the languid tropical breeze.

They knew our love, and witnessed the
Truth of the burning words I told
To you when the world was in its youth,
In sunny days of old.

But the sunny day was night at last,
Our former loves were dead;
Into the shade of a vanished past
Our joy was swept away.

The sharp cold wind was blowing,
Driving the fallen snow,
And the faint light of a star was glowing,
In the twilight of a cold, cold day.

For the gentle light is the same, love,
That shined on us in days of old,
And though now the world is old,
That once to the trees we told.

Let the storm-king ride in his pride;
Heed not the storm-king's roar,
For the gentle light is the same, love,
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—Thomas P. Connelley, in *Harper's Bazar*.

CHINESE FOLK LORE.

Firm Belief of the Celestials in

Signs and Portents.

Dread of Unlucky Words and Charms—

Amulets—Many Instances of Super-

stitious Beliefs and Practices

Related—The Wind and

Water Demons.

Chinese folk lore presents a subject

both rich and varied. Much of it is

connected with idolatry, but in the

district are found legends and tradi-

tions peculiar to the place, with habits

and customs corresponding. They have

great dread of unlucky words, and on

certain days can not be induced to pro-

nounce the word for "monkey," and

are careful to avoid all direct mention

of death.

They will say a man "has passed

from the world," or "has passed from

heaven," but dislike to say "he is dead."

The proper word for "cud" is

studiously avoided, and the euphemism

"longevity boards" used. You may

look in vain for a coffin shop in plain

words, but places for the manufacture

of "long life boards" are numerous.

The words "hung-shan" mean literally

"empty mountain," but are usually

called in to peddle to open the way

invariably say "kat-shan," "lucky

land," because the other expression

is exactly the same as "mour-

ner's hand." But some of the

owners of happiness, because the name

is similar to the word for "war,"

are afraid to use it, and the name

is sometimes utilized. A certain

family were greatly annoyed by crowds

of Chinese men who would gather on an

elevation overlooking their in-

closure and stare at them. Remonstrance

was useless. So one of the gentlemen

brought himself to this superstition

and posted up an unlucky word in a

conspicuous place. The crowd

disappeared. The crowd was

house where it was sure to meet their

eyes. The effect was magical. The

men disappeared immediately and no

further annoyance occurred.

They are firm believers in signs and

portents. A comet presages war, and

as strife is always going on in some

part of the broad empire they always

see this sign. In the case of a

war, the sign is a comet, and the

cause is a dragon, devouring the sun

or moon, and gongs are beaten furiously

to drive him away. The breaking of a

mirror indicates separation from one's

wife, and the death of a child is

portended, even worse evils. Before sit-

ting down they always fan the seat in

the belief that if you sit down while it

is still warm, you will fall out with

the last sister. Sudden sneezing indicates

that some one is talking ill of you.

Mirrors of a certain kind are said to

foreshadow the future, and in some

cases have been exhibited for a few

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